

# CMA

# press release

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## **U.S. Army Alternative Technologies and Approaches Project Extends Public Comment Period on Caustic Wastewater Transport**

**Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.** — The U.S. Army announced today that it is extending the public comment period 60 days on its plan to possibly ship caustic wastewater to New Jersey.

Col. Jesse L. Barber, the Project Manager for the Alternative Technologies and Approaches Project, part of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, said that he is extending the public review and comment period for the Draft Revised Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the 2002 Environmental Assessment (EA) for *Accelerated Neutralization of Chemical Agent and Off-Site Shipment of Liquid Process Effluents at the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility*. The document states that the Army's plan for transporting caustic wastewater, or hydrolysate, for treatment and disposal is safe and will not have an adverse impact on the public or environment at the project site, along the transportation route, or at the potential commercial treatment facility.

The Draft FONSI, together with the Environmental Assessment and the Transportation Analysis, was originally made available to the public on Dec. 19, 2003, for a 30-day comment period. However, with the 60-day extension, the public now has until midnight Fri., March 19, 2004, to provide comments.

The Army extended this period because the original 30-day comment period began before the holidays and people may have missed the notice, and requests were received for an extension and the Army wants to honor those so that the public is informed of plans and activities regarding this project. During the extended comment period the Army will hold a public information meeting.

"My team felt a 60-day extension would allow us time to set up and conduct a public information meeting and still have at least 30 days afterwards for the public to provide comments," Barber said. He indicated that no date has been set for the meeting but said that the meeting date, time and location will be publicized once the logistics have been worked out.

"We hope to correct misconceptions," Barber stated. "People should know that the caustic wastewater is not VX nerve agent. It is the liquid waste from destroying the nerve agent but has none of the characteristics of VX." The caustic wastewater will be analyzed to ensure agent destruction before it is shipped from the Indiana site.

Copies of the Draft Revised Final FONSI, Transportation Assessment and Environmental Assessment may be read or obtained at the Pennsville Public Library, Pennsville, NJ 08070, or by contacting the Newport Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, Newport, Ind., (765) 492-4445, toll free 1 (866) 300-9034, Fax: (765) 492-4475.

Comments may be submitted to the Newport Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, P.O. Box 279, Newport, IN 47966-0517 or by using the phone numbers listed above.

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